

That he was no mere "literary" monologist is proved by the following story. The late Lord Grimthorpe had a party of Yorkshire sportsmen, fox-hunting squires for the most part, at Kirkstall Grange. Hearing that Oscar Wilde was in Leeds, he invited him over for lunch. The moment the poet was announced, the sportsmen went to ground. They collected in groups, hid themselves behind papers, and made the new arrival feel that he was not popular. Wilde greeted his host and began to talk as though he had noticed nothing. "In five minutes," Grimthorpe declared when telling the story, "all the papers were down and every one had gathered round him. to listen and laugh." At the end of the meal one guest after another begged their host to give a dinner and invite them to meet Wilde again. They were enchanted by him and went on singing his praises. Grimthorpe unfortunately could not recall a word of Wilde's conversation, only the fascinating general effect, No subject ever came amiss to Wilde, and he illuminated with fancy and epigram everything he touched. He could keep people amused for hours together. At the end of three or four hours he was talking as brilliantly as at the beginning, and neither he nor his listeners showed the least sign of exhaustion. His greatest friend, Robert Ross, tried to illustrate his effect as a companion by contrasting T»*« with that of his countryman, Bernard Shaw. "I once met Shaw in Chartres Cathedral/* he told the present writer. "He asked me to take him round and tell him everything I knew about the stained-glass windows. By dint of relentless examination he pumped me dry of every scrap of information I possessed, and at the, end of an hour I was nt only for a Turkish bath and alcoholic stimulants. Now Oscar would have told me wonderful stories about those windows—all made up on the spur of the moment, of course —and at the the end of an hour I should still have been begging for more.*' Unfortunately for his friends, fortunately for us, Wilde could not lave on conversation. From 1887 to 1889 he edited *The Woman*\$ World*; and during the six years 1885—90 he wrote several short stories (of which the best was *Lord Arthur Semite's Crimt*), some fairy tales (*The Hapfiy Prince* and *A Haust of Pomegranates*}, an essay on Shakespeare's sonnets (*The Portrait of Mr. W. ff.*)> and *Intentions*. The duologues J» this last contained the cream of his aesthetic philosophy

and gave a new creed to critics. In them
Wilde made his